

The IGUANA

Volume 15, No. 5

March 7, 2003



New Horizons 2003 kicks off in Panama



Linda Watt, U.S. Ambassador to Panama, gives remarks during the opening ceremony for New Horizons 2003 in Panama Feb. 27.

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Carla Pampe
Public Affairs Director

Opening ceremonies for New Horizons 2003 in Panama were held Feb. 27 at the Task Force Chiriqui Base Camp, Camp Amistad, near Las Lajas.

The ceremony was attended by Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso; U.S. Ambassador to Panama Linda Watt; Gen. James Hill, commander of U.S. Southern Command; Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, commander of U.S. Army South; Col. Tony Thomas, Joint Task Force Bravo commander; Lt. Col. Scott Evans, Joint Task Force Chiriqui Commander; and a host of American and Panamanian dignitaries.

During her remarks, Ambassador Watt praised the men and women of Joint Task Force Chiriqui.

"I want you to know how proud I am to see you here this morning," Watt said. "By your dedication, your willingness to serve, and your commitment, you represent everything that is great about the United States."

"I am not the only ambassador here this morning. You are ambassadors as well – ambassadors of gen-

erosity and goodwill," she added. "What you will contributed here, what you will accomplish, will long be remembered and appreciated."

During their three months in Panama, members of JTF-Chiriqui will construct three clinics and three schools and provide medical exams and treatment to thousands of people in the Chiriqui province.

While the majority of the work on the ground is being done by National Guard and Reserve units, members of Joint Task Force Bravo are playing a critical role at Joint Task Force Chiriqui.

Capt. Tom Clark, who works in the J-3 Operations shop at JTF-B, is serving as a liaison officer for the duration of the New Horizons exercise.

"My task was to be the JTF-B liaison officer to JTF-Chiriqui, and to help facilitate their staff's dealings with ours," Clark said. "It was also to act as an advisor to both the task force commanders as far as what is going on down here."

"In addition to that, I have picked up the additional

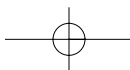
See *New Horizons*, page 8

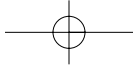
Against the Wall

ARFOR Staff Sgt. Carlton Wilson descends the rappel tower on Soto Cano Air Base Feb. 28. ARFOR Headquarters and Support Co. 1st Sgt. Ramon Bual supervised the training, which included several rappels with, then without a supporting wall.



Photo by Spc. Chuck Wagner





Smoke alarms burning issue in dry season

By **Spc. Chuck Wagner**
Editor

As the weather heats up in Comayagua Valley, fire safety becomes a burning issue. Especially when there's little rain, Soto Cano's temporary wooden structures can easily ignite, according to the base fire chief. "The hootches are made of wood, which is getting older, and over time the weather has dried them out," said Senior Master Sgt. Gerrodd Stevenson. "Especially now with the dry heat – they can be like kindling."

Smoke alarms are a first, critical defense for saving lives. A fire department exercise determined the typical hootch

can burn to the ground in less than four minutes. "That gives the occupant maybe a minute or two to respond," said fire prevention office Staff Sgt. Paul Barker. "The smoke alarm is crucial to giving the occupant enough time to get out." During a recent inspection of billeting rooms and hootches, fire department personnel discovered broken or missing smoke alarms, and smoke alarms with drained batteries. It is the billeting occupants' responsibility to ensure the proper maintenance of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers, Stevenson said. Occupants who are missing smoke alarms or believe theirs to be defective should call the Joint Lodging Office's

Staff Sgt. Andre Adair at ext. 6748. Occupants should test smoke alarms monthly, and replace dead or weak batteries. Batteries losing power will "chirp" as a warning. Dust can prevent an alarm from working properly, and alarms should be carefully vacuumed with a soft bristled brush attachment. There should be a smoke alarm in separated areas within each hootch. "Anytime there's a wall, that usually means you should have one alarm for each side," Barker noted. Fire extinguishers should be properly mounted on the wall, the gauge should indicate an adequate charge, and there should be no major visible damage such as cracked hoses or gauges. Stevenson reminded occupants that

candles are prohibited by Directive 1 and base fire regulations. Hootch residents should not block or impede access to the trap doors, which were designed as emergency exits if a fire has started near the main entrance. When the smoke alarm sounds, an occupant's first reaction should be to evacuate. The occupant should attempt to use the extinguisher only if the fire is small and easily manageable, Stevenson said. After evacuating, the person should quickly call the fire department at ext. 911 from a safe phone. All neighboring hootches or rooms should be alarmed and evacuated, because hootches are close enough for fire to spread, Stevenson said. Occupants should never go back inside.

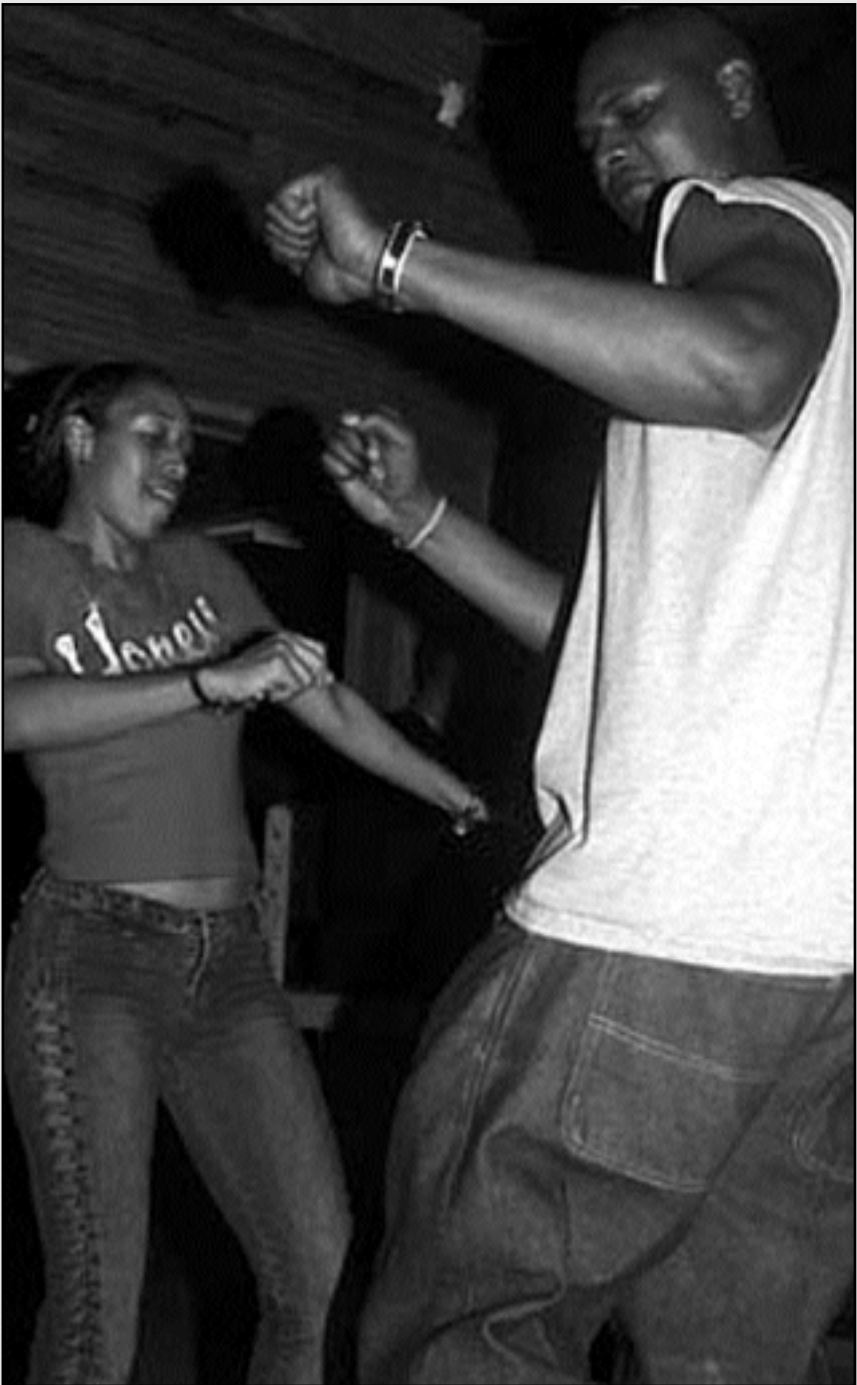


Photo by Spc. Chuck Wagner

Latin beat

ARFOR Spc. LaQuita Smith and Sgt. Ernest Ward dance at Soto Cano's Oasis Club Feb. 22. ARFOR hosted a Latino Night and raised about \$200 to benefit Honduran orphanages. The unit uses proceeds to purchase food supplies, Christmas gifts and other items, according to Staff Sgt. Sergio Negrón. About once a month, various units host Latino Night, and the events are open to the public.

SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to *The Iguana* should be sent to the PAO at charles.wagner@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. D-06. If you have questions about possible submissions call ext. 4150 or 4676 to talk to the editor.

The IGUANA

EDITORIAL STAFF

JTF-Bravo Commander
Col. Raymond A. Thomas III

Public Affairs Director
1st Lt. Carla Pampe

Superintendent
Tech. Sgt. Tom Mullican

Editor
Spc. Chuck Wagner

Photo Technician
Martin Chahin

E-mail:

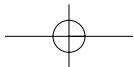
PUBICAFFAIRSOFFICE@jtfb.southcom.mil

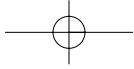
Website: <http://www.southcom.mil/home/jtfbravo>

This funded, joint U.S. Air Force/Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas. Contents of *The Iguana* do not necessarily reflect the official view of, and are not endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense or the departments of the Air Force or Army.

Content is edited, prepared and provided by the Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs Office, APO AA 34042, in Building D-06. Telephone numbers are 011-504-234-4634, ext. 4150 or 4676. Fax is ext. 4550. or DSN 449-4150/4676. Readers with story ideas should call the Public Affairs office. All photographs are property of JTF-Bravo unless otherwise noted.

PRINTED BY PUBLYNESA





March 7, 2003

Soto Cano

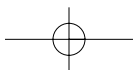
The IGUANA 3

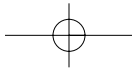


Photos by Tech. Sgt. Tom Mullican

Stars over Soto Cano

(top) Gen. Donald G. Cook, Air Education and Training Command commander, checks out one of the fire department's fire engines during his visit to Soto Cano AB Feb. 27. (bottom left) Lt. Gen. William T. Hobbins, 12th Air Force commander, far right, donates a basket of clothes and toys to Ms. Norma Leticia Lopez Madrid and Mr. John Andrassy, Guadalupe Orphanage representatives. (bottom right) Cook, left, and Hobbins, right, arrive at Soto Cano AB to visit the troops. Maj. Gen. John F. Regni, 2nd Air Force commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Gary Coleman, 12th Air Force command chief master sergeant, also visited the base.





Photos by Spc. Chuck Wagner

Before organizers raised the alarm, they prepared casualties for realism. Staff Sgt. Joe Flores, MEDEL operations, applies face make-up, including blood dye, to mock patient Sgt. Kiomishia Hernandez.

Mock

Exercise tests a

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

Several Soto Cano Air Base units practiced responding to a downed aircraft last week during training in preparation for a planned Honduran air show.

Personnel from Joint Security Forces, MEDEL, Soto Cano Fire Department, and the 1-228th Aviation Company rushed to a reported crash site at the base firing range. Organizers had contrived a bloody disaster scene with injured and dead passengers.

The intent of the Feb. 26 training was to initiate personnel in Soto Cano disaster team response and provide a requirement for mass casualty training prior to an air show. Maj. JP Page, base civil engineer. The Honduran Air Force plans an open house and air show possibly as early as next month.

The training demonstrated Soto Cano capabilities in responding to a disaster.

“What a great team effort! We did identify some challenges we need to improve on, but that's why we're here for training,” said Page. “Working together in such a coordinated effort, this can only make us better.”

Before the first alarm was raised, organizers prepared victims with bloody wounds and large bruises, and cases strapped victims with fake rubber limbs. They also squirted a blood-like dye. The victims groaned, stumbled confusedly around the site.

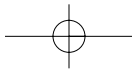
Fire trucks arrived minutes after the first report.

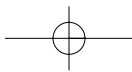


MEDEL staff litter carry patients to a waiting helicopter. The clinic quickly assessed casualties and shipped out critical cases.



Soto Cano Fire Department rescuers carry Sgt. Norma Morales.





mayhem

air base's crash response

resented the downed DC-8, and victims sprawled throughout the vehicle's cabin.

The firemen doused imaginary flames, and pulled passengers from the wreckage. Page said the nicknamed Fire Dawgs continue to impress him with "absolutely superior response." Firemen treated casualties until MEDEL staff arrived and prepared the casualties for rapid transport to the clinic.

"It's a good way to test us in a situation where it's easy to forget what you've learned. We have to remember — don't get caught up in the screaming, yelling, the blood and the guts," said Sgt. Edwin Rotger Jr. of the 1-228 Medevac team.

You've got to take a breath, slow down and do what you've been trained to do. You can't forget simple things because of the confusion."

MEDEL responders rushed casualties to the clinic, where medical staff treated and sorted out several serious cases who were whisked to a waiting helicopter. After the helicopter lifted from the pad, it was time to self-evaluate.

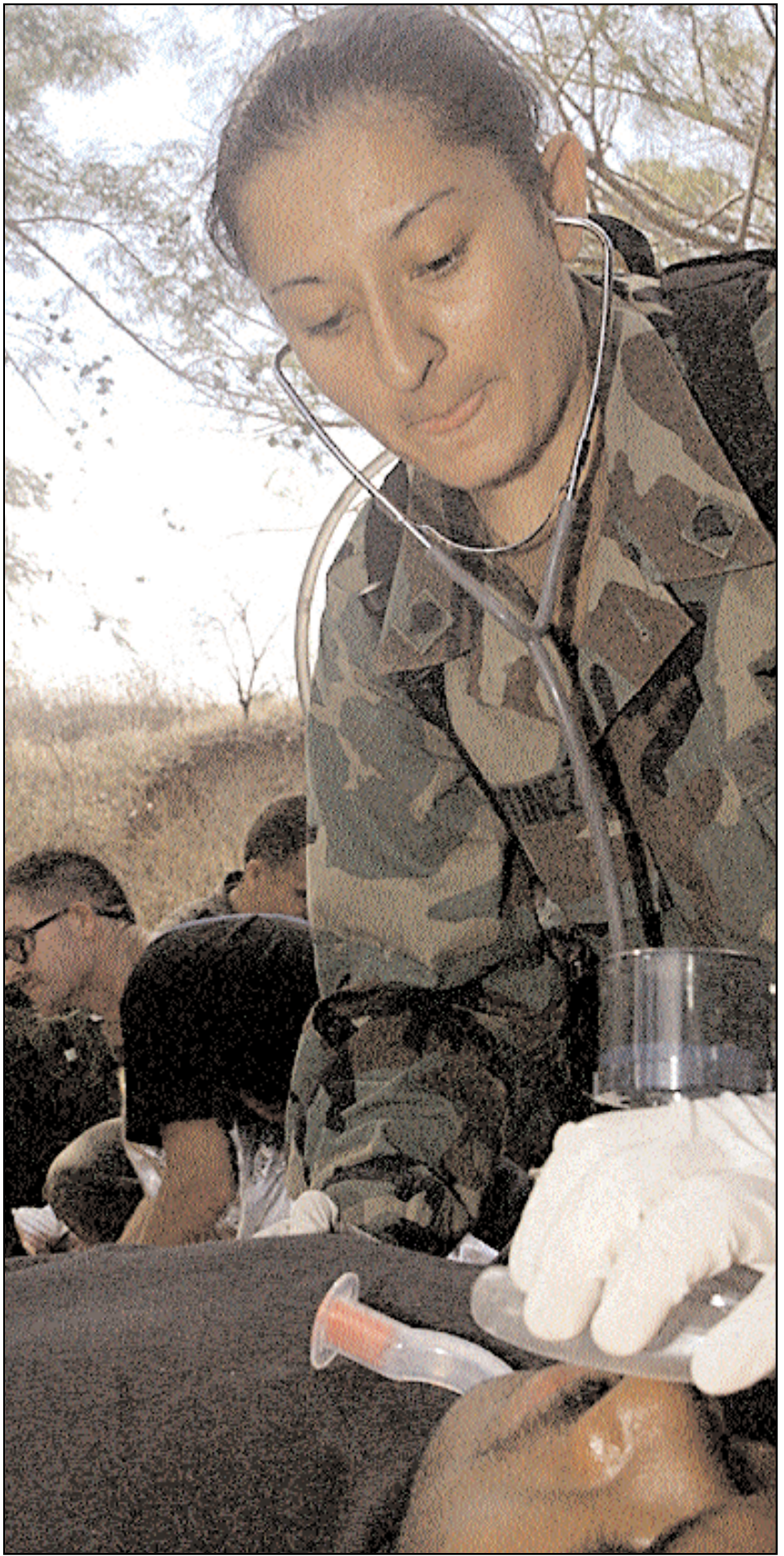
"The response time was good, and there was good command and control. Everybody knew their role," said Staff Sgt. Joe Flores of MEDEL operations. Flores acted as operations control for the exercise, a duty which included adding a touch of the unpredictable to pre-planned training.

"I tried to trip them up, but they responded well," Flores said, looking over notes he scrawled during the disaster and nodding his head.

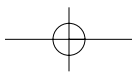
"They can save somebody's life."

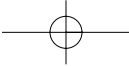


es from the wreckage to a triage site set up by first responders.



Spc. Christina Martinez, 1-228 Flight Medic, checks a patient's heart rate and breathing.





Photos by Spc. Chuck Wagner

Top, not every Guadalupe orphan can fit in the dining hall at once, so many sit outside while the airmen prepare and serve lunch. Right, a Santa Ana student challenges 1st. Lt. Michael R. Ryan, base civil engineer, during a soccer game.

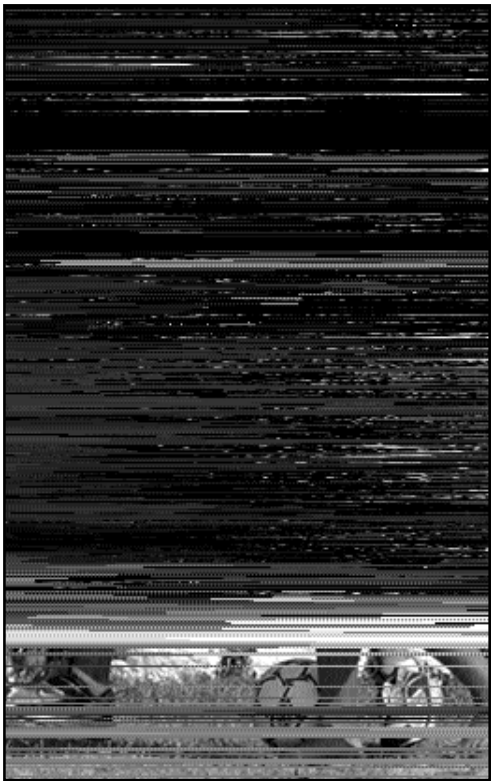


Photo by Spc. George Kyriakeas

Tech. Sgt. Johnny Valentin-Valentin holds a child who still clutches a toy car he received from an airman at the Guadalupe Orphanage.

Airmen deliver mucho happiness

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

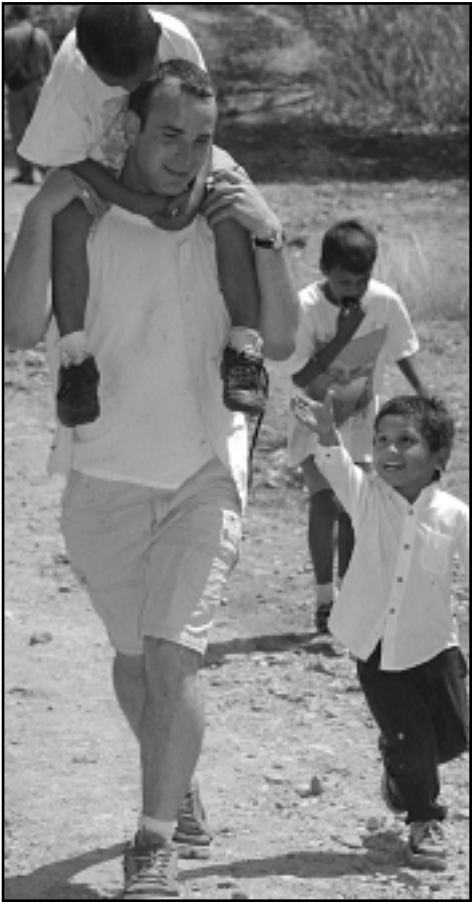
When the orphans spot Staff Sgt. Matthew Huddle, they bounce on their toes yelling, "Carrito, carrito!" Carrito means little car, which the children crane their necks to see in Huddle's hands as several AFFOR vans roll up to the Guadalupe Orphanage just south of Soto Cano Air Base Feb. 23.

"There never seems to be enough, even though I bring some every two weeks," said Huddle, as children leaped at his upraised hands for a toy. AFFOR volunteers prepare lunch for the children, pass out candy and play soccer. Sometimes the afternoon is spent in conversational closeness with the children, who thrive on the airmen's attention.

The outing includes a stop at the nearby Santa Ana school for teen-age girls. Mission Honduras operates the orphanage and school, which number among several charities that stretch the organization thin as it tries to alleviate the country's endemic of orphaned or desperately poor children.

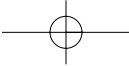
"Doing this makes the tour here so much more enjoyable because you are helping the underprivileged children," said Master Sgt. Carlos Marrero. "Mission Honduras takes care of their basic needs, but we try to help with what they can't always do — focus on the individual child and give them attention."

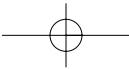
The Santa Ana students are more reserved as the vans pull into their living compound where dining room, kitchen, and dormitories are connected in a semicircle with a central courtyard. The girls



ARFOR's Spc. George Kyriakeas carries a child on his shoulders. The soldier and a retired service member joined AFFOR on the outing.

are calm and attentive while the airmen serve freshly-cut watermelon, but cut loose once the volleyball net and soccer goals set out in the courtyard. AFFOR donated the sports equipment to the school.





March 7, 2003

SERVICE NEWS

The IGUANA 7

Army limits re-up options

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs
Army News Service

WASHINGTON - With the buildup of forces overseas, the Army is projected to exceed its end strength authorized by Congress this year and re-enlistment options are being adjusted to keep the service within required limits.

The Army is authorized 480,000 troops, and Congress has mandated that the Army stay within 1 percent of that number, Sgt. Maj. James Vales, the G1 retention sergeant major said. Projections show that for fiscal year 2003, personnel strength may exceed that ceiling. By reducing options, no one will be prevented from re-enlisting, but the numbers will be moderated, he added.

Korea is the only option mid term soldiers serving on a second or subsequent enlistment period will have if they want to re-enlist for an overseas assignment. Overseas and stateside assignments are the most popular options soldiers inquire about, said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Moss, a career counselor for the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army.

“Some soldiers are disappointed that they have to re-enlist for the needs of the Army, but we don't re-enlist soldiers for options, but for service to this nation” Moss added. Another incentive that has been cut is the Selective Reenlistment Bonuses -- monetary incentives given to soldiers in jobs that are short and have inadequate retention levels.

“Bonuses have been limited considerably compared to the last fiscal year,” said Sgt. 1st Class David Gross, career counselor, Combined Joint Task Force-180, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, N.C., who was quoted in an article from the 11th Public Affairs Detachment in Afghanistan.

“Not only are the funds limited, but also the MOSs which offer bonuses.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Cecilio M. Ricardo Jr.

Head first inspection

KORAT AIR BASE, Thailand – Feet are all that show as an airman from the 12th Aircraft Maintenance Unit at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, inspects his F-15E Strike Eagle jet during Cope Tiger 2003. The unit is in Thailand for the annual exercise that gives servicemembers from eight different U.S. bases and two other countries an opportunity to hone their deployment and employment skills and improve air-combat techniques while building stronger relationships.

Air Force: Others pulling ahead of U.S. aerospace

By Master Sgt. Scott Elliott
Air Force Link

WASHINGTON – America produces the world's best military aerospace hardware but other nations are pulling ahead, the Air Force senior executive told lawmakers Feb. 27.

Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche told members of the House Armed Services Committee that apparent contradiction is the result of a cumbersome acquisition system.

According to Roche, foreign nations are able to buy American-made aircraft up to four times faster than the Air Force.

“(Air Force Chief of Staff) Gen. John P. Jumper and I have looked at when each of these (foreign) contacts were signed and when the articles were delivered,” he said. “We were stunned.”

Even though aircraft with “enormous improvements” in electronics and engines commonly have integration problems, Roche said foreign nations are still having their purchases delivered faster.

“Something is not right with our way of acquisition,” he said.

Roche said he is working to correct the disparity between foreign and domestic sales. The secretary of defense will make the final decision on whether or not the service moves forward with any changes.

States include Israel, Greece, Oman, Singapore, Chile and Poland.

“

Something is not right with our way of acquisition

- Dr. James G. Roche
Secretary of the Air Force

”

- To illustrate his point, the secretary pointed to the superior aspects of other nations' air forces, noting that:
- Japan has the best air battle management aircraft.
 - Until the F/A-22 Raptor is fielded, the best twin-engine fighter is South Korea's F-15K.
 - Block-60 F-16s, purchased by the United Arab Emirates, will be the world's best single-engine fighter.
 - Other nations with newer F-16s than the United

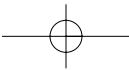
“This is not an argument against foreign military sales,” Roche said. “It's fundamentally recognizing the need to recapitalize our aging aircraft fleet.”

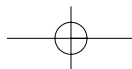
The average aircraft in the Air Force is 23 years old.

Roche acknowledges that while the investment of allies are of value to alliances and the American industrial base, he is concerned that other nations are now fielding better equipment.

“We are facing the undeniable reality that ... superior capabilities are now, or shortly will be, present in American-produced airplanes that don't fly an American flag,” he said.

“This concerns me, and should concern anyone who cares about giving the best our nation has to offer to the men and women of our armed forces.”





New Horizons 03 - Panama

From page 1

duty of operations officer here,” Clark added. “I synchronize and orchestrate all operations that go on as far as mission requirements with the assets we have down here, and help prioritize the different missions. It’s basically one-stop shopping for problem solving.”

Clark said his biggest challenge was getting to know how National Guard units operate.

“Overall, it’s been a very pleasant experience as far as understanding and appreciating what they bring to the table,” he said.

Clark, who will remain in Panama until May 3, said he is looking forward to accomplishing the mission successfully.

“It’s a great opportunity for us to help the Panamanian people out by building schools, clinics and latrines,” he said.

It’s also a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to interface with the National Guard and the Panamanian people.” In addition to Clark, Capt. Dominic

Ciaramitaro, J-7, is also serving as a liaison officer to JTF-Chiriqui for the duration of the exercise. He stays busy inspecting job sites and answering any engineering-type questions the Guard units might have.

“I help them with any questions they may have about construction plans and blueprints, and also make sure they are doing the work correctly,” he said.

Joint Task Force Bravo also provided two water purification specialists who helped get the water systems up and running at the base camp until National Guard volunteers arrived to take over the operation.

Throughout the duration of the exercise, Joint Task Force Bravo will continue to send staff members on staff assistance visits to help with inspections and anything the JTF-Chiriqui staff might need.

“It’s a great interface between the two task forces and a great opportunity for JTF-B soldiers to help the National Guard accomplish their mission,” Clark said.



Master Sgt. Jonny Stone (far left) and Capt. Dominic Ciaramitaro, both from the J-7 shop at Joint Task Force - Bravo, discuss construction issues with members of the Ohio National Guard who are building a medical clinic at Cerro Iglesia, Panama. Ciaramitaro is serving as a liaison officer to JTF-Chiriqui for the duration of the New Horizons Exercise. Stone is in Panama for a month assisting the task force staff with anything they might need in the way of engineering issues.

A member of the Ohio National Guard clears a site in preparation for the unit to build a new medical clinic at Cerro Iglesia in the Panamanian province of Chiriqui. The clinic will have a laboratory, two exam rooms, a bathroom and a storage room. It will serve hundreds of people who live in the region.



Capt. Tom Clark, Joint Task Force Bravo liaison officer to Joint Task Force Chiriqui in Panama, handles an urgent matter at the base camp’s Tactical Operations Center. Clark is a member of the J-3 shop here, but will remain in Panama for the duration of the New Horizons Exercise.



Panamanian President Mireya Moscoso greets Spc. Nate Kaminsky, an electrician with the Ohio National Guard’s 216th Engineer Detachment in Walbridge, Ohio.

